

525 ELEVENTH STREET, NW (COMMERCIAL)  
(525 Eleventh Street, NW (Apartment))  
Square 347  
Washington  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-801

HABS  
DC  
WASH,  
653-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

525 ELEVENTH STREET, N.W. (COMMERCIAL)  
(525 ELEVENTH STREET, N.W. (APARTMENT))

HABS No. DC-801

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### LOCATION:

Square 347, Lot 816  
Washington, District of Columbia

### SIGNIFICANCE:

One of a pair of similar buildings, 525 Eleventh Street is an excellent example of highly decorative brick buildings constructed in downtown Washington in the late 19th century. The richly articulated Eastlake-inspired facade, which architects Pitney and Bradford added to an existing three story building in 1890, incorporates both an oriel and a projecting bay. 525 Eleventh Street contributes to the Pennsylvania Avenue National Historic Site.

### DESCRIPTION:

525 Eleventh Street, N.W. is a two-bay, four-story brick building that faces west onto Eleventh Street. The present Eastlake-inspired facade and the 4th story were added to an earlier brick building. 525 Eleventh Street occupies an unusually small lot no deeper than the width of the adjoining lot on F Street. The 1887 Hopkins Map, the earliest depiction of structures on the square, shows a pair of narrow brick buildings fronting on Eleventh Street. The 1888 Sanborn Map shows a three-story brick structure on the site. The 1890 building permit "to build a new brick front and make general repairs" encompassed construction costing \$2500, half the cost of new construction of the same date by the same architect at 523 Eleventh St., N.W. (HABS No. DC-800). The cost indicates how thoroughly the building was reworked at that date (D.C. Building Permit 264, July 31, 1890).

The resulting structure, which dates to 1890, is a mid-block building. The front (west) facade is its only exterior wall. The building features a two-story projecting bay below a Palladian window set within an ogee arch on the south; there is an oriel window on the north side of the 4th floor. Arched lintels executed in brick surmount the paired windows on the 3rd floor; flat stone lintels top the windows on the 2nd floor.

The building has been altered numerous times since it was constructed. Most of these alterations have affected the storefront and lower floors. In 1905, the Commercial Fire Insurance Company of D.C. applied for a building permit for work costing \$65. The description of the work provides some evidence of the appearance of the original shop front. "The show window is now composed of 2 large plate windows and it is desired to substitute instead 3 window plates, 1 large and 2 smaller than now used. We also wish to raise the bottom rail of the window 18." The original size of window will not be increased." Ernest L. Elgin was the mechanic for the work (D.C. Building Permit 2661, June 6, 1905). In 1924, the building was altered to accommodate a broadcasting operation. An aerial was constructed over both 525 Eleventh Street and 1012 F Street and a generator motor for a radio store was also installed (D.C. Building Permit 5226, November 26, 1924 and D.C. Building Permit 5991, December 23, 1924). In 1929 the show windows were again

rebuilt. Washington Loan and Trust commissioned a new storefront consisting of 2 windows, 6 ft. wide, projecting 3 ft. beyond the building line. The storefront cost \$1000 (D.C. Building Permit 125066, July 2, 1929). In 1946, an elaborate storefront costing \$6500 was installed. The storefront was comprised of a marquise, 6 ft. wide, projecting 3 ft. beyond the building line and two show windows, one 6 ft. wide, the other 12 ft. wide, also projecting 3 ft. (D.C. Building Permit 283659, March 18, 1946). Presently the projecting bay is clad with aluminum siding.

#### **HISTORY:**

W.S. Hoge, a produce commissioner (Don't Tear It Down Survey Form), owned 525 Eleventh Street in 1890 when architects Pitney and Bradford and contractor J.M. Dunn gave the building its present appearance (D.C. Building Permit No. 264, July 31, 1890). B.B. Bradford, the architect, was born around 1858 in Cincinnati. He attended the Königlische Hoch-Schule zu Stuttgart for four years, graduating in 1879. He worked abroad for three years before returning to the United States around 1883 when he opened an office at 1313 F Street, N.W. (*Historical and Commercial Sketches of Washington and Environs*, p. 151).

525 Eleventh Street appears to have been devoted almost exclusively to commercial use from 1914, when D.C. City Directories first index building occupants geographically. Both D.C. Building Permits and the 1904-1916 Sanborn Map show that the Commercial Fire Insurance Company of D.C. had offices on the 1st floor (D.C. Building Permit 2661, June 6, 1905). Tenants included Richard P. Cronin, dentist (1914, 1919, and 1929), barbers (1914, 1924, and 1929), haberdashers and men's clothing stores (1939, 1943, 1948, and 1954), and florists (1960, 1964, and 1970) (City Directories). D.C. Building Permits present a slightly different picture. A 1924 permit lists the building occupied as a residence although no residents are listed in the City Directory for that year (D.C. Building Permit 5626, December 10, 1924).<sup>1</sup>

The building is presently vacant. 525 Eleventh Street will be partially demolished to construct a new office building that will occupy the western half of Square 347. The design of the new building will retain the facade of 525 Eleventh Street. This HABS documentation was prepared pursuant to a Program of Mitigation for the required demolition. The Program of Mitigation was developed for the new project under D.C. Law 2-144, the Historic Landmark and Historic District Protection Act of 1978.

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<sup>1</sup>City directory listings were sampled at five year intervals beginning in 1914, the first year that listings are indexed by address. Residents of the building in 1914 were traced back to their earliest date of occupancy.

**SOURCES:** D.C. Building Permits (National Archives)  
D.C. City Directories  
Don't Tear It Down Survey Forms (D.C. Historic Preservation Office)  
*Historical Sketches of Washington and Environs.* Washington, D.C.:  
E. E. Barton, 1884.  
Hopkins Map (Library of Congress)  
Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (Library of Congress)

**HISTORIAN:** Betty Bird, Architectural Historian  
Mary K. Knill, Researcher  
2607 24th Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20008  
December 1988

For documentation of individual buildings within Square 347, see:

HABS No. DC-788 Square 347 (Commercial Buildings)  
HABS No. DC-789 1005 E Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-790 1007 E Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-791 1009 E Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-792 1013 E Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-793 1011 E Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-794 501-503 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-795 507 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-796 515 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-797 517 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-798 519 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-799 521 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-800 523 Eleventh Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-802 1008-1010 F Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-803 1012 F Street, NW (Commercial)  
HABS No. DC-804 National Capital Press Building

ADDENDUM TO:  
525 ELEVENTH STREET, NORTHWEST (COMMERCIAL)  
(525 Eleventh Street, Northwest (Apartment))  
Square 347  
Washington  
District of Columbia County  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-801

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PHOTOGRAPHS

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